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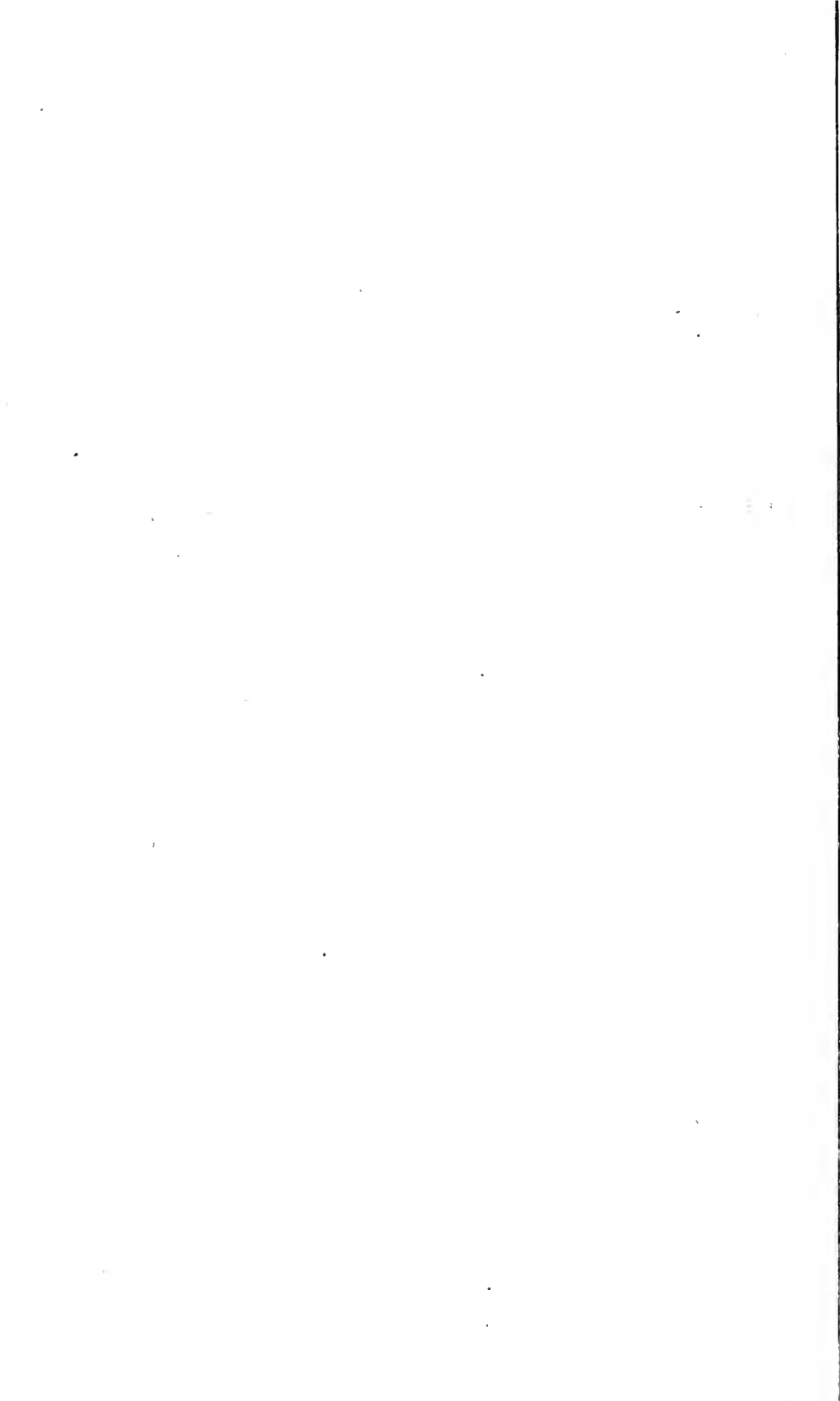
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AN ADDRESS
ON THE
LIFE AND CHARACTER
—OF—
JAMES ABRAM GARFIELD,
TWENTIETH PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,
DELIVERED
SEPTEMBER 27th, 1881,
(THE DAY APPOINTED FOR MOURNING AND HUMILIATION,)
AT GRACE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH,
BY
R. STOCKETT MATHEWS.

STENOGRAPHICALLY REPORTED BY DOUGLASS A. BROWN.

CURRY, CLAY & COMPANY,
Steam Printers, &c., 24 German St.
BALTIMORE.
1881.



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BALTIMORE, SEPTEMBER 29TH, 1881.

Hon. R. Stockett Mathews,

DEAR SIR:

We have been deeply gratified by the address which you delivered on Monday last, at Grace Methodist Episcopal Church.

It is conceded by all who heard it to have been as discriminating and appreciative as it was thoughtful and scholarly.

The published report in *The American*, admirable as it was, contributed only a large fragment of the whole, and we are anxious that so just and adequate a eulogy, should be printed in some more permanent form.

We therefore earnestly request you to furnish us with a copy for publication, and at the same time tender to you our cordial thanks for the service you have rendered the countrymen of the lamented President, in giving them a portraiture of his life and character, as eloquent as it was impartial.

Very truly, yours,

FERDINAND C. LATROBE,
KEEN & HAGERTY,
JOHN L. THOMAS, JR.,
ABR'M B. PATTERSON,
SAMUEL H. ADAMS,
JOSEPH H. CADDEN,
JAMES W. FLACK,
H. WEBSTER CROWL,
JOHN K. SHAW,
WM. H. GRAHAM,

HENRY F. GAREY,
FRANCIS P. STEVENS,
SAMUEL M. SHOEMAKER,
D. H. CARROLL,
JOHN Q. A. HERRING,
LOUIS C. MULLER,
Pastor of Grace M. E. Church.
OLIVER W. CLAY,
WM. H. CURRY,
HENRY F. JOHNSON.

BALTIMORE, SEPT. 30TH, 1881.

*Hon. Ferdinand C. Latrobe, Hon. Henry F. Garey, Hon. John L. Thomas, Jr.,
Hon. Francis P. Stevens, Sam'l M. Shoemaker, Esq., Jno. Q. A. Herring, Esq.,
Hon. Abr'm B. Patterson, Rev. Louis C. Muller, Wm. H. Graham, Esq.,
and others.*

GENTLEMEN:

I am in receipt of your favor of yesterday, and am very much obliged to you for its kind approval of the address at Grace Church. I take pleasure in sending you the full report prepared by the Stenographer, Mr. Douglas A. Brown.

Very truly, yours,

R. STOCKETT MATHEWS.

A D D R E S S .

The proclamation of the living President has convened the people in assemblages of mourning for the dead ;—of humiliation for themselves. Every invocation to the former, come from whatever source it may, is superfluous. The appeal for the latter addresses itself with remorseless emphasis to every thoughtful, every prayerful well-wisher of his country who feels that we have been following too much the devices of our own hearts. Over all the fairest portions of our vast world the wisest and best of mankind are deploring, as never before, the death of only one person from the unnumbered millions of the human family. We are sharers in a catholic grief which, unhappily, requires moderation rather than stimulant. Peasants and princes, kings and queens, hewers of wood and drawers of water, as well as the leaders of progress and discovery in other climes, are directing their eyes towards the newer continent and its young republic with unaffected sorrow, almost as keen—wellnigh as profound—as our own. Never before has just such an existence passed through so many different, picturesque phases, to the pathos and tragedy of an ending so totally unexpected, and so appalling. He was the son of a widow, born in a cabin. He fell, in the noonday of anticipation, from that station which the statesmen of the United States have been accustomed to deem the zenith of human ambition.

The plaintive monody which flows from the heart of the stricken nation winds from hamlet to hamlet, from city to city, and its echoes are repeated again and again, until the

reverberations traverse the circumference of our planet, and return to swell the volume of the still fresh lamentations on our farthest shores.

He possessed so many attractive excellencies of character, united with so many and such versatile capabilities for usefulness, that the consolations of memory, as we ponder what he was and has achieved, are impotent to assuage the anguish of a thousand ungratified hopes. Crushed by such a dispensation, we shrink from attempting to foreshadow darkly what he might have been, and might have done.

Nature and culture, each at its best, were to be seen in his full development, joining the graciousness of an even unselfish temperament, the tender strength of constant affections, the generous enthusiasms of a large and liberal spirit, with every grace and refinement and fascination of speech and manner, which could be acquired from the pursuit of the loftiest objects, and enhanced by familiarity with the most elevating studies.

"The noblest things, which are sweetness and light," says Dean Swift; and of these the Magistrate who is gone had more than ample share, mingling in such harmony that, while one bewails the perishing of a personage so eminent by the hand of an ignoble assassin, one renders the homage of a genuine distress, of a stunning sadness for which tears are the only eloquence, to the son, the husband, the father, who was our brother, and whose virtues have ennobled humanity in our own eyes. It is an inspiration, as we contemplate his course of a single score of years, not so much to emulate his intellectual acquisitions, or to take pattern after his incomparable performances, as to try to become such as he was to those nearest to him, by the fireside and in the library; and to fit ourselves to be trusted and respected as he was.

Gentleness of disposition, a heart luminous with joy, and unfailing cheerfulness, are potent to win and hold the attachments of those with whom we may be associated. After all, to be able to forge the enduring bonds which are made fast and strong by the affinities of taste and sympathy and feeling,

and to come back from toil or sacrifice or prominence to the privacy and repose of the enchanted home in which love is master of all feasts and ceremonies, and congenial friends, however few, gather about us, this is, indeed, the richest compensation for every endeavor, the charm and unchanging delight of the highest form of being. It is because he shone conspicuous for these social and domestic virtues, because he had such a simple, symmetrical individuality, that his taking off—"a deed without a name"—awakens with such pitiful intensity all our better emotions, and we cannot be charged with weakness when we weep over him, either in solitude, or with the multitude.

[Here the speaker paused for a moment, and then resuming, said:]

I had written thus far, and nothing more, when a realization of the tremendous loss to which our people and humanity and posterity have so suddenly been subjected, came over me, and with it, in mental panorama, such a direful train of immediate ills and probable consequences, conjured by no willing imagination, that I was constrained to throw aside my pen, and to abandon all attempt to prepare myself for this evening's task, until I should stand in the presence of an audience whose faith and prayers would banish the unbidden and unwelcome visions from my sight.

Only a little while ago, it seems as if we could touch the radiant day by stretching our hands towards the invisible calendar, the residents of Washington beheld such a pageant as had never before made their avenues tremulous with the bustle of an inauguration. Only a few months ago a strong man, in the very meridian of his physical bloom and beauty, who had not yet reached the ripeness and maturity of his transcendent intellect, came, at mid-day, before a great throng of his admiring fellow-citizens. The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, in full robes, was stationed before him, Senators and Representatives of the Nation clustered about him; just by his side stood the venerable woman who had borne him and had raised him, and had carried him through privation

and poverty, to the perfection of a character replete with dignity and magnanimity; another, not less dear, with happy looks, whose gentle nature had tempered his own to a richer fineness, waited at his right hand. And when he had pronounced the great declaration, that he would see that the Republic should suffer no detriment, and it had been carried on high to be recorded for eternity, his first act was one of grateful recognition to the instrumentalities which had been most efficacious in the moulding and fashioning of his character, to those who had been the animators and guides of his career; and he bent his stately head to kiss the mother whose lips had taught him the Lord's Prayer, and the wife from whose changeless confidence he had drawn the first sweet baptism of that bliss which surpasses all other happiness known on earth. From that hour he entered upon a brief conduct of affairs, in which, with almost startling abruptness, he revealed to our people new qualities, which are demonstrable by public servants; moral intrepidity that was absolutely inflexible; a superiority to malign counsels and untoward incitements, that would not permit him, for a moment, to stoop to any dishonoring surrender of the prerogatives of the Executive, although, by dalliance or concession, he might have purchased temporary quietude for himself.

His Secretary of the Treasury, whose ability and long training were supplemented and encouraged by the sound and accurate views of his superior, went on to finish that great act, the funding of the National Debt, which has made every Chancellor of the Exchequer, in foreign Empires, marvel beyond expression at the lessons of political economy which are being illustrated among us, by steadfast dependence upon the honesty and resources of our countrymen. From every quarter, from Maine to California, from Oregon to Florida, although hosts of those who were seeking substantial rewards for their partisan activity flocked in crowds to the Capital; this President, of such extraordinary self-poise and definite purpose, dismissed office-seekers by the thousand, remitted them to other avocations, and was the first of our rulers, for

many successive terms, to announce, as the irreversible principle of his administration, that no one should be disturbed in the tenure of a subordinate post so long as he was capable, and honest, and faithful, until the expiration of his commission; and that then his merits should be considered as thoroughly, and as conscientiously, as the claims of others who might be applicants for patronage. And if he had done nothing in his short official occupation, or indeed throughout the whole manhood of which nearly a moiety had been devoted to the public, but to establish an inflexible regulation in this praiseworthy direction, he would have left a memory to the American people immeasurably precious, and an example of deference to the crying desiderata of our civil service which none of his immediate successors will be rash enough to ignore.

Who was this hero? The bells of St. Paul's Cathedral, of London, answer with their resonant tongues. The Canons and Prebendaries of the Cathedral of Liverpool, the prodigious numbers congregating in chapels and churches, and beneath the groined dome of the Alexandra Palace, are uttering, for our English-speaking kindred on the other side, some measure of the prevalent sympathy which they feel in a common calamity. In the villages, in the universities, in the capital of Germany, that name, which is seldom absent from our thoughts, is being pronounced as softly, and as reverently, and as lovingly, as in our broad Commonwealth. The English Court has been ordered to wear the symbols of mourning; the Spanish Court, also, has been directed to put on the emblems of royal grief. From the recent Republic of France, our younger sister, are transmitted the graceful condolences of its President, its Senators and Deputies, its writers and nobility. In every harbor, from the Northern Isles to the Pillars of Hercules, along the Mediterranean, and by the margins of the Gulf of Venice, in the ports of Sweden, Denmark and Russia, the national flags on every ship are flying at half-mast. Even in the mosques of Constantinople the Moslems are forgetting to bend their knees to the rising sun, are omitting to chant

the prayers of the Koran to their Prophet, and are breathing benisons for the dead ruler of the free people across the resounding sea.

Was there ever, since the world began, a disaster so widely, so simultaneously appreciated, so cordially, so compassionately bemoaned? No distance too great, no population too isolated, no civilization too alien, no religion too restricting, no partition too impervious, no artificial barrier of any kind sufficient to restrain kindred humanity from turning towards us, and bowing their heads with us in an affliction that is overwhelming, and craving for us a deliverance from its burdens, which can only come from the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords!

O, if the issues of life and death are meted out by a blind, blundering fate, how wretched must we be to-day! But, thanks be to God, they are in the hands of a benignant and intelligent Providence, working through grand laws, fulfilling His primeval scheme, and throwing now, as He did from the beginning, the whole majesty and grandeur of His unerring comprehension into the upward progression of our race. And we know, that unless the mission of our Republic be ended, unless free institutions have gratified their predestined scope, that the Creator, whose plans summoned us to another attestation of their practicability, will still continue our evolution through His own ways, for His own purposes, which antedate historic ages; that He will yet bring us to the expansion and roundness of a national history which will exhibit man's capacity for self-government, and the enjoyment of the blessings of civil and religious freedom, protected by the toleration and charity which can only thrive in a State without nobles or aristocracy.

The death of President Garfield may prove the advent of a new epoch, the beginning of ameliorations "devoutly to be wished for,"—the dawn of innovations and reformations, about which we have thought and felt acutely for many years,—of which some have latterly written and spoken despairingly,—towards which this visitation may impel us, not so rapidly or

expensively as we were forced eighteen years ago, to sanction another great revolution ; but, nevertheless it may compel us to commence the needful changes which remain for us to establish, and about which I shall say something presently.

It is one of the peculiar features of our political equality, that no boy, however humble his birth, however narrowing and depressing the circumstances by which he may be surrounded, and however little aid he may receive from others, need feel that there is any insuperable necessity for his continuance in obscurity. To be free to lift up one's eyes and see the shining portal of the Temple of Fame, to be able to long for the strength to mount up to it, and the courage to enter it, constitute, after all, half the battle. The boy who has felt stirring within him the yearning, the deep longing to be something and to do something and to know everything, has already half conquered the world. But he must hunger for knowledge—thirst for honor. If he act persistently, in keeping with such aspirations and motions of his soul, pausing neither on the one hand to listen to the alluring temptations of vice, nor on the other to satisfy merely sordid greed, but determined to dedicate himself to a life work of noble effort and distinction, will keep before him the great maxims and principles by whose informing and unfolding vitalization, others have wooed and won a two-fold immortality, before he has overstepped his half of a century he will be able to reach the coveted summit where others have carved their names, and, standing on the very loftiest heights of opportunity, he can turn and ask others, less fortunate, to behold in him the actual fruition of beneficent laws; to confess that his success is only signal proof of what may be accomplished by a free-man in a land where every man is something in himself, with greater facility and certainty than in those societies amid which rank and precedence and importunity are usually pre-requisites to the earning of a brilliant celebrity, and an introduction to public consideration, in the halls of Parliament or Assembly.

I should like to be able to tell you just how it was, and when

it was, that he, whose title I need not mention, whose image has melted into every breast, first came to suspect that there were within himself some attributes that ordinary men do not possess; an adaptability, a perceptibility, an impressionability; a capacity for the acquisition of learning, for the assimilation of truth; a persistency of motives, a willingness to deny himself, a readiness to submit to any suffering that would only clothe and equip him with the mystic enginery of art and science, and literature, those leverages through whose help men lift themselves; until he could go forth heir of the teachings of the great and good, full and efficient, ready to take his place among men, to assert his right to take part in moulding the future and to occupy his proper attitude "in the foremost files of time." And when you remember from what low estate he started, and where he was working in modesty and patience only a few years ago, and what he grew to be through the legitimate outgrowth of his own systematic and methodical use of his capacities, aided of course, fructified and enriched, by what he gained from contact with other minds, you can see, that given a sound heart, an earnest ambition, and clever faculties—the seemingly ordinary faculties of childhood—and, by keeping at work all the time; by burning the midnight lamp; by the consecration of one's self to the invisible ends of life, to the intangible compensations, to those things which no one can gather at will by stretching forth his hand, nor transmute into gold, or place, or position for the time being, by any cunning guile or necromancy; by an apprenticeship to high ideas; by faithfulness to far-off ideals; little by little, year by year, never lapsing aside from the upward paths, however difficult; a brave American boy can at last reach the vantage-ground of glory, can be a figure of mark, and what is better still, may learn to do abiding deeds and to speak ringing words which shall elevate a whole people to loftier conceptions of duty;

"May mould a mighty State's decree,
And shape the whisper of the throne."

It is not a close proximity between a Western canal and the executive residence of the President of the United States. Long as is the physical interval between Lake Erie and Washington, the moral and intellectual stadia over which he had to journey were longer still; and yet it took but twenty years for him to travel the whole distance and to reach his place; by no short cuts, no secret road; a place for which he did not intrigue or bargain by any contemptible artifice, any illegitimate pushing. Twenty years! Think of it. Fatherless son of a poor widow; canal boy, a lad driving mules on the tow-path; a daily laborer, chopping wood at twenty-five cents a cord, or mowing down the grass of the fragrant meadows for half a dollar an acre; a rough carpenter, hewing out the green logs of the forest to build the scant log-houses of farmers in that sparsely-settled wilderness; a student in the district school; and then the certified teacher of those who had been his playmates and comrades; next a painstaking scholar, fitted to enter the junior class of a first rate college; soon a graduate; a professor of languages; the youthful president of Hiram College, carrying eager and ardent minds through the curriculum of the humanities; then a member of the State Senate of Ohio; at twenty-nine, lieutenant-colonel of a regiment of volunteers, one whole company of which was composed of the undergraduates who had attended his lectures, and were willing to go out to death, if need be, with him; then helmsman of a frail vessel, through forty-eight hours of peril, during which no experienced pilot could be found to steer it over the impetuous rapids of the swollen Big Sandy river—to bear succor to his famishing soldiers—steering it with a hand as firm, and an eye as clear, as yours or mine as we sit in the tranquillity of this sacred edifice; then forcing battle with a commander more accomplished in military craft than himself, and with triple the number of his troops, and driving him from his mountain fastnesses, and winning the first grand magnetic triumph in the war for the Union: then detached to report to General Rosecranz, as his Chief of Staff; then, at the fateful battle of Chickamauga, when the

main wing of the army, under the Commander-in-chief, was pierced, and disheveled, and dissipated in flight, making his way alone through briar, and brake, and forest, until he returned to the front, where General Thomas was still marshaling a wall of human adamant against out-numbering legions, and aiding him to hurl back their assaults; then with his own hands assisting General Granger to fire the parting fusilade of artillery, which rang out like a *feu-de-joûé*, and told that the awful combat of the doubtful day had closed with night and victory, and that new lustre had been shed upon the loyal arms; then, at thirty-one, a Major General; then nominated, without his solicitation of a single vote, and elected a Representative in Congress, for six successive terms; then, by the unanimous choice of his party, made Senator-elect; and before taking his seat in the Senate, nominated, and, in spite of his advocacy of another, chosen President of the United States, in the forty-ninth year of his age.

O! beautiful youth! O! strenuous and consummate manhood! Coming up from such an origin to take the coronation of a simple oath, and tread upon a level with kings and emperors in obedience to the suffrages of a free people, the intelligent suffrages of a free people;—for the majority which crowned him as Chief Magistrate was the aggregate expression of the best conscience and intellect of this nation. Never before did any candidate enter the Executive Mansion, more palpably, and undeniably, by the deliberate approval and discriminating sanction, of the better classes in the critical communities of America.

Here is a climax which surpasses the fables of antiquity, the legends of mythology. Here is a rapid, unintermitting ascent which beggars description and impoverishes language to portray. I challenge those who are most conversant with the biographies of the great worthies of the past to point out to me, among them all, a parallel to this almost marvelous rise to exalted stations and honors. Is it to be wondered at, that now he has disappeared from the theatre of the world's activities, that he has thus unexpectedly perished by the

stroke of a monster more execrable than the Caliban of Shakspeare; is it astonishing that now, when all his acquisitions, all his attainments, all his elegant and affluent scholarship, all his unique and lovable traits of personality, all that he was, all that he might have been, have been extinguished; is it amazing that our tears are flowing like rivers of waters? Is it phenomenal that there comes over us such a feeling of inexpressible regret, when we think of all these things; and when the weight of this immeasurable loss strikes us with its resistless force, we seem in vain to lean upon our faith in Jehovah, and can only blindly, despairingly, beseech him to give us some surcease of sorrow, to give us some medicament for the nation's woe.

And yet,—and yet, my friends, this death, after all, we must hope, we must trust, all of us must firmly believe, may and will prove a very day-spring of manifold blessings to our people, and to the generations of an unvexed future.

We need a national introspection; we need a reminder from the heavens that “all we like sheep have gone astray.” We are none of us, I fear, altogether guiltless, in the eye of the great Giver of all good, of our brother's blood. If we had been true, each and every one of us, high and low, to our civic duties, from the earliest youth up to the present dismal day; if we had been bending our energies to foster virile public opinion, and mould healthy public sentiment; if we had not lent ourselves to augment the rancors of partisanship, and to increase the hateful plrenzies of faction; if we had not perverted our inestimable privileges, standing silently by, time and again, acquiescent, passive, content to witness the elevation of bad men into posts of power, simply because, being glib talkers, they could arouse the noisy huzzahs of the masses; if we had not been indifferent to the perversion of our elective system, and supinely willing to surrender its operations to the manipulation and control of “managers” and “bosses;” if we had not been too long only too willing to permit trading politicians to make a business of selecting our Representatives in Congress; if we had always demanded that competition

for such offices should be open, that the choice of the fittest should be a uniform rule and practice, that public men should have clean hands, and possess at least decent attainments in the rudiments of political science; if we had insisted upon the choice of delegates who were capable of comprehending the elementary axioms of good government, who could not only spell out the heads of existing laws, but could devise amendments and frame new statutes to remedy the deficiencies of the old, and extirpate some of the numerous evils of our jurisprudence, and make more homogeneous and symmetrical our civil politics, and help to beautify and adorn all our institutions until they should reach their ultimate perfection; if we had kept watch and ward over the tendencies of every democracy to beget a thousand evils when the wise and disinterested and patriotic are excluded from public employment, this terrible evil could not, would not, have happened. We have accepted idols of stubble, of wood and brass. We have been lured by orators who had the dramatic trick of titillating the ears of heterogeneous crowds from the rostrum and the hustings. We have, without protest, without opposition, permitted professional politicians to compass their paltry schemes, to frame together before our very eyes what is called in common speech, "the machine," and have emboldened them, by apathy at least, to grind out results which have shamed, if not degraded us. We have been willing to submit sometimes to imperious and capricious charlatans, and to see combinations of demagogues effected openly for the express purpose of lifting into power some "expedient candidate," some "strong man" who would be as clay in the hands of the potter in promoting the behests of his staunch confederates. If every one of us had written to the editors of newspapers what we thought of harmful events as they transpired, and had fearlessly, justly criticised candidates and jobs, and chicanery; or had called our people together in town meetings, to reprobate pernicious methods for the profit and admonition of false leaders; if we had always discharged our inherited part as citizens, and had felt the sanctity of the obligation resting

upon us, and, solicitous to exalt the standards of citizenship, had stood upon the outermost walls, whether men were intent to deter us, or heed us, had cried continually against our degeneracy, and the patent shortcomings of our fellows, this fell misdeed, which slew the beloved, would not have been wrought. For James A. Garfield has fallen a victim to the intolerance of a single faction, out-spoken and loud-spoken until its hot poison, falling into the distempered brain of that iniquitous wretch in Washington, fired him to slay the most conspicuous opponent of the mischiefs and practices I have been enumerating, just so surely as Henri Quatre became a martyr to the Protestant opposition to the Jesuits, and was slain by the fanatical dagger of Ravallac, or as Lincoln, died a sacrifice to the expiring fury of civil war. Infamous creatures are never wanting to hurry forward in periods of exceptional excitement, and translate into abhorrent acts the logic of those whose fiery words may set aflame the passions of bad instruments. In older days, an impious wretch burned the Temple at Ephesus, that he might, through such a sacrilege, inherit undying mention, and he and Ravallac, Booth and Guiteau, belong to the same class; not demented, but devilish.

Some one may object that the connection between our remissness in the conduct of affairs, and the murder of the President is morbid and overstrained. I cannot pause now to exhibit its completeness. If any effect can be traced to its cause, I think we can easily show the near relationship between our inattention to—nay, our gross neglect of—our duties as citizens, and the prevalence of a condition of things which renders, the conception and execution of such a crime, possible. And there are larger grievances, fruit of the same prolific germs, towards which, sooner or later, our affrighted eyes will be attracted by the inexorable necessities of some overshadowing menace.

The careless mariner, whose ship, with swelling sails, is bowled along by auspicious breezes, takes small heed of the drift of undercurrents; but, when a storm darkens the horizon, and his vessel, trembling from stem to stern, from keel to

royal-truck, with the fury of the blast, is quickly reduced to reefed topsails, and is baffled by head winds, he makes closer reckonings by day, and heaves the lead by night, lest he should founder upon some beetling shore. And thus, while we seem to be prosperous and to be dwelling under auspicious conditions, we venture to be careless about political matters: by and by, the whirlwind we have been allowing to brew will burst upon us, and then, when it may be too late, we will rouse ourselves to the exigency of threatened ruin, and exert ourselves to avert its completion.

If the springs be impure, so will the streams be. We abandon the prime movements in politics—the choice of representatives—too much to the illiterate, the vicious, and the profligate; to those who have the least interest in, the smallest regard for, good government. It needs only cursory observation of current facts to discover some of the worst sequences of our reprehensible negligence. We concede that our legislative bodies are notorious for their incompetency, accused of bribery, and are said to reek with corruption. Legislation, if we may believe common rumor, is sold to the highest bidder. Place and power are put up, virtually, at auction. Corporations are multiplied. Charters bring their price. Great monopolies elect or defeat such delegates as they prefer or distrust. The governor of a State, who has the power to appoint judges, is, at the last hour, when his triumph seems assured, beaten by the votes of the employees of a railroad. These monstrous consolidations traverse one-half the Continent with continuous lines, and pervert the franchises, which were granted for the establishment of highways of commerce and inter-communication, into the worst conceivable means of raising or depressing the prices of stocks. Colossal fortunes, through such speculations, are easily amassed, and become, in their turn, engines of oppression. They control legislation, and support an audacious lobby. They bind and loose our traffic with such rules and regulations as may suit their convenience. Shall we raise no voice against these abuses? Do we owe nothing to the future? Is our heritage wholly ours, to waste

and destroy, or are we trustees for our children to the remotest generation? Our rights are usufructs—not absolute. We may enjoy our liberties, but we owe it to ourselves, to humanity, and to God, not to cheapen them. In our public conduct we appear to be alive only to the shibboleth and the discipline of one party or the other; to be prompted within its ranks by the blind zeal of faction. Our merchants gather and spend; our professional men spin down technical grooves; our skilled artisans mind their handicrafts. In the forum, in the cloisters of learning, in the daily marts, in the workshops, we are busy, each with his own concerns, and say to ourselves: “let the world wag on, it will last our day.” But this is not manly, nor virtuous, nor patriotic.

We are debtors for our privileges, our prosperity; we are unjust stewards if we accept these things unquestioning their divine vouchsafement, and take them as matters of course, as the thoughtless possess the dew, and the sunshine, and the light of stars, the early and the latter rain. Pardon me for my urgency, I am adhering to the text of the proclamation. I am neither alarmist nor pessimist. We are assembled to mourn, and to humiliate ourselves. Taught by the terrible monition of this untimely death; shocked by the terrifying shedding of this innocent blood, which seems to be sprinkled on the door-posts of every home in the land, let us pray that the evils of our times may pass over; and to insure their removal, let us vow to become citizens in truth and in fact, and strain our utmost energies to fulfill every loyal obligation.

If these solemn needs are apprehended, these warning lessons are appropriated by us, then our great and good President will not have died in vain. If they be not learned, it will be long indeed before heaven will grant such another to adorn private life, and give brighter radiance to public station.

I consider the life of James A. Garfield, viewed either from its open or its private standpoint, the most perfect which has been lived in our century. I know of no one among his survivors who can be rated as his superior. Nor is this a new opinion of mine. It is no fresh estimate, beaten out by the hand of the

destroyer: it is no mere sentimentality which serves to heighten the rhetoric of a memorial address. On more than one occasion, during the last canvass, (I presume that, without immodesty, I may say it,) I had the honor to address some of the largest audiences which gathered in the states of New York and Pennsylvania. Twenty-seven times, during last autumn, I was permitted to appear before audiences, the least of which did not number less than twenty-five hundred listeners, and the burden of all my song, the theme of my warmest advocacy, were the personal life and character of the noble gentleman who was the candidate of the Republican party. I studied him in campaign biographies, in his speeches, in his essays, in the maxims which he had contributed to enlighten and convince others in a hundred debates.

I remember when I first saw him, eighteen years ago, this fall, on the platform of a meeting in Monument Square. I recall the very words with which he was presented to the thousands of upturned eager faces, as the "brave General Garfield, fresh from the army of the Tennessee." The people welcomed him as one, even then, not unknown, and hung upon his words of good cheer. I was invited to pass with him a large part of the evening of Thursday, the sixteenth of June, a day or two before he went to the ocean, with his convalescent wife. I knew him. I knew how absolutely frank and sincere he was, how ingenuous and direct. I knew what beautiful docility he united with stability of will. I knew what balance of judicial temper he evinced; that, although his perceptions were unusually quick, his meditative faculties were equally as active, and that the two sets worked together in perfect poise; that what he saw or felt was dissolved in the alembic of judgment, and was crystallized there before it was formulated either in word or deed; that he was a thinking man, a feeling man of exquisite sensibility and delicacy, an honest man, a Christian, a Christian politician, a Christian statesman. [Smiles in the audience.] Oh! I am not surprised to see that some of you smile, when I couple those words with such a prefix: *Christian statesman!* a

Christian politician! How many of these are there? They are not abundant, but they are to be seen! And yet, here was one who never hesitated to avow his full confidence in the authenticity of the Christian system, who never disputed the divinity of Jesus, the God-man, his atonement and vicarious sacrifice; the authority of the Holy Scriptures; a rational belief in another world; and a fairer being beyond the grave, to whose duration he looked forward always for the infinite perfection and completion of his own grand nature. He turned aside from scepticism, from subtlety and dogmatism, refusing to accept the deductions of the materialists, and the positivists, of the transcendentalists and the pantheists; believing with all the tenacity, as well as with all the intensity, of his cultivated intellect, in one God, though unseen, yet omnipotent, ever present, holding the ocean in the hollow of His hand, and giving to the spheres their courses. When science, through the telescope, revealed to him an extension of space, undreamed of by the ancients, and planets swimming in unimaginable remoteness; when it penetrated the bowels of the earth and counted the almost incredible ages of stratification, through which it had been travelling before its crust was fitted for the habitation of man; when the microscope disclosed the myriad forms of sentient life; when he was made to realize that the seemingly complex and discordant wonders of creation were under the reign of immutable law, of which order and progressive change were the accordant elements; when he looked down the corridors of the past, and saw that all the cycles of the ages had been impelling humanity forward out of individual life, out of tribal life, out of single isolated communities into great aggregations of political forces; when he saw great nations, obedient to the slowly operating potencies of civilization, being lifted up to their higher planes of enlightenment, with the progress of liberty, and science, and art;—he said “these marvels, this unity of results, this slow but sure unfolding of cosmogonical motives, must and can come only from a God; the spectacles which I behold only increase my vene-

ration : they only enlarge my views of Him, deepen my faith in Him, give me a surer anchorage for my hopes, light up the dusty path from the grave to the gateway of that Paradise where all the mysteries that are inexplicable here will be opened to my sight, and I shall know the Great One in His majesty and splendor." O! glorious belief! that in the midst of the reverses, the enmities, the jealousies, and disappointments of public contentions, could keep his spirit always on the wing for "that glory which fadeth not away." A great light has gone out and it is well that the nation mourns. But as for him, we need not grieve; he has joined the innumerable retinue of torch-bearers, whose brightness illumines the realms of thought, and shines upon the resolute feet of those who ascend—

"The great world's altar-stairs,
Which slope from darkness up to God."

He had done much and very hard work to bring himself up to his own notions of efficiency; he had communed, one by one, with every one of the illustrious of the earth, who march, evermore, in that long line which reaches down from Homer to Tennyson; from Herodotus to Motley; from Aristotle to Herbert Spencer; from Demosthenes to Webster and Gladstone; and each had imparted to him some sweet instruction; had distilled into his very soul some vital juice of lofty aim or noble purpose. Aye! that long procession, from Sophocles and Euripides down to Shakspeare and Longfellow; from Plato to Bacon; from Virgil, Lucullus and Horace, to the great thinkers, great historians, great dramatists, great jurists, and great prophets of our own time. For there are living prophets who are foreseeing for us some of the things that are yet to be, of which science and art will give us copious volumes, which religion will not gainsay, but welcome with gladness. Galileo now might thunder in the Vatican.

I was reading, only a little while ago, the diary of General Garfield, which he kept while a student at Hiram College. It is a more than remarkable thing that, all through his pro-

gress, there was always to be found some notable woman at his side to sustain and to keep him pure and true. I found that when he was reading philosophy and history and literature, it was Almeda E. Booth who was his help-meet; walking with him the flowery acclivities of Parnassus, or drinking with him from "the pure wells of English undefiled." What an enviable pupilage! None of us can forget the classic panegyrics of those passages in Cicero's oration for the poet Archias, in which the greatest rhetorician of Rome discourses upon the arts which concern the civilizing and humanizing of men, having some link which binds them together, connected by some relationship to one another.

He affirms that he had persuaded himself from his youth upward, both by the precepts of many masters and by much reading, that there is nothing greatly to be desired but praise and honor, and that while pursuing these things; all tortures of the body, all dangers of death and banishment are to be considered of small importance; that even if there be no such great advantage to be reaped from literature, and if it were only pleasure which is to be sought from such studies, still it should be considered a most reasonable and liberal employment of the mind, "for other occupations are not suited to every time, nor to every age or place; but these studies are the food of youth, the delight of old age; the ornament of prosperity, the refuge and comfort of adversity; a delight at home, and no hindrance abroad; they are companions by night, in journeys, in the country."

Do you think the President could have become what he was, if he had not had so much of aptitude and assiduity; if he had not gone to the very fountain head of intellectual advancement? I remember reading, in the biography of Lord Macaulay, by Mr. Trevelyan, a speech which the former delivered in the House of Commons in favor of the introduction of civil service reform in the management of the government of East India, as well as other papers which he wrote on the same subject, and in which he sought to show that "a man who is an applicant for an office is none the worse because he has

been a senior wrangler at Cambridge." Young gentlemen! if you wish to pass through what some people call "this vale of tears," in the enjoyment of delicious days and compensatory nights; if you would gain stamina, and nerve, and pluck, to meet every dilemma and overcome every obstacle that, in the future, are certain to beset you: if you want to acquit yourselves with credit, in every place to which you may be called, to seize every opportunity that may open before your footsteps; if you mean, in a word, to climb, do not covet the winged sandals of Hermes, but strain every faculty to be acknowledged as votaries of that Pallas Athene, who typifies, in the significant myths of Hellas, the blending of chastity, valor and wisdom. There is nothing that so fully equips a man for great station as the having schooled himself in the amenities of art and literature. Learning gives us the eyes of an Argus, and the arms of a Briareus. And it was because General Garfield was thus accoutred, thus furnished within and without, that when the supreme moment came, a few years since, for him to step forward as the leader of a compact minority, and meet upon the floor of the House of Representatives the champions of an aggressive majority, in a speech of wonderful beauty and force, he overcame them all, and saw them, in the tumult of the arena, lying prostrate before him. He had made himself master of the processes of clear reasoning; he had acquired the fine faculty of detecting every vice and flaw in the argument opposed to him; he had gained that infallible, broad knowledge of the motives and consequences of political conduct, which one learns nowhere else so well as in good books.

Ladies and gentlemen, friends, fellow-citizens! cannot we bring ourselves, in the spirit of the proclamation of President Arthur, in the spirit of this solemn occasion, with the gloom of this unspeakable bereavement encompassing us so awfully in spite of the outer-sunshine, to draw from such a catastrophe the obvious lessons it was designed to teach us? A cloudy curtain is hanging before our eyes, with no landscape of hope in its foreground. No one can predict what the

next mishap will be, what the next day will bring forth. Can we not, in the face of these tremendous realities, strive to consecrate ourselves to higher, and broader, and nobler conceptions of responsibility for the consequences of our inattention to the common requirements of citizenship. We ought to love our native land, and its children, and its institutions. We are united again, never to be disrupted unless through our own default. We all consent that ours is a priceless heritage. We give praise to the Ruler of Nations that he has made it absolutely free, and that there languishes not one slave between the Atlantic and the Pacific, the Lakes and the Gulf. Is it not, is it not, without any hyperbole, without any exaggeration, without any overweening conceit or unjustifiable pride—is it not the greatest, most favored country upon the face of the earth? It is the only real republic that has ever flourished. Those of Greece, and Rome, and the Italian republics of the middle ages, were but mere phantasms compared to the living corpus of this great and growing Commonwealth of States. It is instinct and redundant with the genius of true freedom—national and individual. Where else do men live and never feel the hand of the Government laid upon them, in severity, so long as they observe its laws? Where else is there so liberal and so admirable a system of common school education? Where else is taxation imposed with such strict adaptation to the real necessities of government, and such consideration for the circumstances of the individual? Where else have we the same smooth, inaudible machinery? Where else is the same deference for law and order, the same proud and buoyant confidence in the rightmindedness of the masses of the people?

When we are in a strait between two parties, we do not say that we will rally about so-called leaders; when we are threatened, we do not say that we will follow the dictates of this party or that party. We say we will trust to the intelligence, to the apprehensions, to the sentiments, of the majority of our countrymen. Under every circumstance incident to the fluctuations of civil policy, and proposed measures in

finance, in considerations of revenue or trade, we trust to the homely wit and consciences of the great body of voters; and although we stand, to-day, in the midst of dismay and despondency, I think I am warranted, by our past experience, and by the recollection of recent events, in saying to you that we can trust to the great majority of our countrymen still; in every exigency, but we want fewer of them; in dilemmas, but we do not desire them to be too frequent; in emergencies, but we want to remove the possibility of their costly occurrence through our own sins of omission or commission, through our failure to discern the perils which underlie universal suffrage, and those elective customs which induce thousands to become politicians for a livelihood, and convert so many into chronic holders of office or perpetual seekers of office.

When our best citizens are ready to participate in the proceedings of conventions, and to serve on committees of organization; when our merchants, who are devoting themselves to the bargain and sale of goods and chattels, whose industry is expended upon 'Change and in the counting-room:—when capitalists and solid men who have the ability to discharge public trusts, if they had the desire; when all these are induced to bestir themselves to contest with the ignorant and the vicious the control of public affairs, we will have fewer occasions to look, as a last resort, and in extremities, to the right impulses and sentiments of "our sovereigns," when properly evoked. Did you ever think of it my friends, that there is not a single large city in the United States, at this time, which has in the councils of this nation a single eminent representative? Not one of them! [Sensation.] I can safely challenge this intelligent audience to name a single gentleman, justly distinguished for great services or great talents, who is a member of either branch of the national legislature, or a deputy, from any one of our larger cities. And yet the word "politics" is a derivation from the Greek for "city." [Sensation.] Why is this? Whence do your great men come? *From the rural districts!*

General Garfield was fortunate in his constituency, and they were proud of his ever increasing influence. It was a case of mutual attraction. The "plain folk" of the Ashtabula District were, for the most part, descendants of ancestors who had migrated from New England. Their habits were almost archaic, uncorrupted by enervating luxury, yet not indifferent to the mutations and fluctuations of the busy world. They were fond of books, and of papers; kept themselves abreast of public events; and were as tenacious in their opinions as they were steadfast in their friendship. They had noted young Garfield, from the time he made his first speech: they liked his mettle, and his downright straightforwardness; his honest face and voice, and the fullness and accuracy of his information. His behavior, in the Senate of Ohio, had given him a wider recognition: his brilliant engagements and prompt promotions, on his own merits, after he entered the army, had won golden opinions from all sorts of men. It was not strange then, that in looking for a successor to Joshua R. Giddings, they should have selected the young legislator who had become so rapidly a successful soldier, with a reputation for gallantry, steadiness, and sound discretion, which had reached the ears of Lincoln and Stanton, and indeed had penetrated far beyond the War Department. They nominated and elected him, and, with an overwhelming majority, sent him forward, with the garland of their franchises over the laurel wreath he had plucked on stricken fields, along that high road to everlasting renown, upon which he made no misstep, until he reached its ultimate goal.

He used to say, in his sententious way: "It is the unexpected that always happens." But lasting reputation is never an accident. Men who wake up to find themselves celebrated have done something to earn the guerdon of praise. A few cut their names, laboriously, letter by letter, upon tablets that do not yield to the corroding tooth of time; but most men write theirs in the sand, and the next flow of the tide of opinions, ever changing, of fortunes always short-lived, washes away the evanescent tracery. Although he began

in the valley, his gaze was constant towards the crests of the hills which are ever the boundaries of the dreamland youth. He knew that good food would give him stamina, and he fed his mind on no other. He knew that industry, rectitude, charity and suavity, would attract the good opinions first and then the kind support of others—and he cherished these aids to preferment. He was in dead earnest in all that he undertook, and counted no failures in his undertakings, because he measured his ability by the magnitude of the task which he set before himself, and when that demanded all his reserve forces, he bent to the labor until it was done, and well done. When he was appointed a member of the Committee of Ways and Means, and he felt it due to himself to become thoroughly posted with reference to political economy, he set himself to the acquisition of French, because some of the best authors had written in that language.

But I have already detained you far beyond any proper or decorous bounds. It remains for me to say but a few words more. I have spoken of the youth, the statesman; now I come to speak of the dying hero. I think that when each one of us draws near the end, and is bidden to lie down to die, that the example of the fortitude of James A. Garfield, will give us hardihood to look the grim conqueror of all men in the face. O! what a glorious chamber of suffering that was at Washington, and afterwards, at Elberon! What uncomplaining and resignation he manifested, hour by hour, as the fading strength and flickering life were ebbing away,—so slowly—so exherciatingly. When first wounded, he said to Doctor Bliss: "Doctor, tell me the truth; I am not afraid to die." (He had said before, just after he was elected, to Mr. Hinsdale, the president of Hiram College: "no matter what may happen to me, the bitterness of death is past;" it passed when he separated from his wife to go, in '61, with the 42nd regiment, of Ohio, into the war; he had felt it all then.) "Doctor," he said, "tell me the truth; what are my chances?" "You have one chance, Mr. President, in a thousand." "Then, Doctor, we will take that chance." Not sanguine, yet willing

to live, but not afraid to die. And he took that chance. It is a most singular thing that during all that period of seventy-nine days of an agony that has been but little understood, because the physicians themselves were ignorant of the exact lodgment of the ball, and did not imagine that all the tender network of nerves that lie about the spine had been impinged, and some portions of it rudely shattered, and that the bullet was lying in the midst of sensitive organs, keeping him in constant torture, and that nothing but a heart of steel and nerves of iron restrained him from crying out with its pangs; it is a singular thing, I say, that during all that time we have no mention of his ever having named, or spoken of, the brute by whom he had been shot down, but once, and then without a single word of anger; no indication of revenge or indignation or illtemper of any kind, no murmuring, no impatience. And how his friends clung to him! General Swaim, Colonel Rockwell, and all those who were about him; what fidelity, what tenderness, what sweet attachment! What gentleness, what courtesy he manifested toward one and all! How he shrank from giving trouble. How he studied to avoid giving pain. You remember the tale that came to us over the wires, that after Mrs. Garfield had been speeding almost with the rapidity of lightning from Elberon to Washington, when she first entered into his presence, a heroine worthy her martyr, although he had but just recovered from the shock of the collapse that had prostrated him immediately after the crime, and when he seemed to be nearing the very edge of the precipice and about to plunge over into the unknown illimitable beyond, that even then, standing on this awful verge, when his wife came, there was a smile upon his face and a warm salutation to brace her heart from breaking outright. And then think of that last letter to his mother, written to make her think he was not hopeless, though he knew he had but one chance in a thousand.

What fortitude he displayed! What Christian philosophy, unyielding strength of will, and sublime moral courage, to wait so patiently, facing the last scene in the drama, day by

day! O, what an awful vis-a-vis that was! Death here, and the "old soldier" looking at him for seventy-nine days, not knowing at what moment the skeleton hand would be laid upon his heart, and its throbbing pulsations, its loves, would be abated forever. Wonderful life! Superb death! Grand public service! Noble private life! Illustrious statesman! Benefactor of his race! James A. Garfield has become the property of history; and if foreign nations are contemporaneous posterity we know what the judgment of history will be; for foreign nations have already proclaimed their admiration of the symmetry and perfection of his character, the lovable completeness of his rounded life.

And now he is sleeping beneath the fresh mold of the grave in Lake View Cemetery. We have not seen the slow pace of the mournful procession, nor heard the soft dirge of its march, nor the requiem which has spoken peace to his slumbers! We have not seen the tearful assemblage as it gathered around the open sepulchre; but our thoughts have been trending there. I am not sure that many of you, in sad fancy, have not been there even during the whole of my feeble, and I fear incongruous and inadequate, discourse to you this evening. Many and many a time even I have found myself listening to catch the sounds of the bells and the far-off sighing that has broken from the sore hearts of his nearest, and dearest, around that memorable tomb.

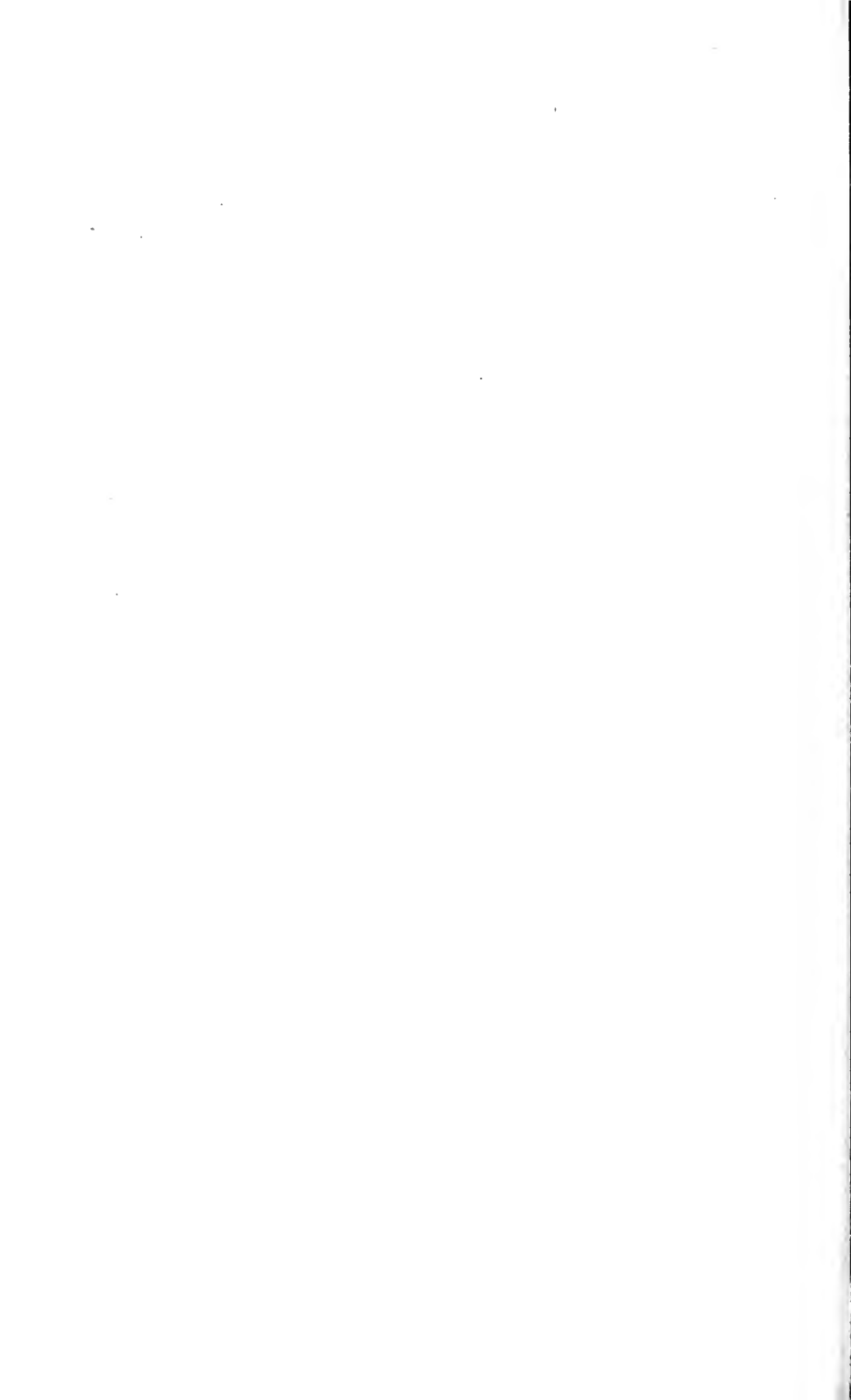
Oh, if we could only pray as they prayed in olden times! If there was only some one now who could give the word of command: "To your tents, O, Israel! to your tents!" If we could only see the Ark of the Covenant of promise for our civil liberties carried before us! If we could only long for a fuller manhood! If we only had a profounder realization of our duties of citizenship! If we could only see in this dispensation the hand of a kind and merciful Father, and hear His voice persuading us to draw from it its deeper and more significant lessons through the next two decades of the Republic, and until its full first century shall be told! Ah, then, we would not hear again the voice of fac-

tion, nor hearken to the clamors of parties; we would not tolerate again the recriminations and embittering antagonisms, which once sundered, and have kept us too long apart as a people. But we would all try to do our best for our common land. We would claim but one name, one common country, one common destiny. Children of one kind beautiful mother, the Union, we would never weary in aiding to make her more beneficent, more beautiful, and resolve to see that her graces shall be perpetual

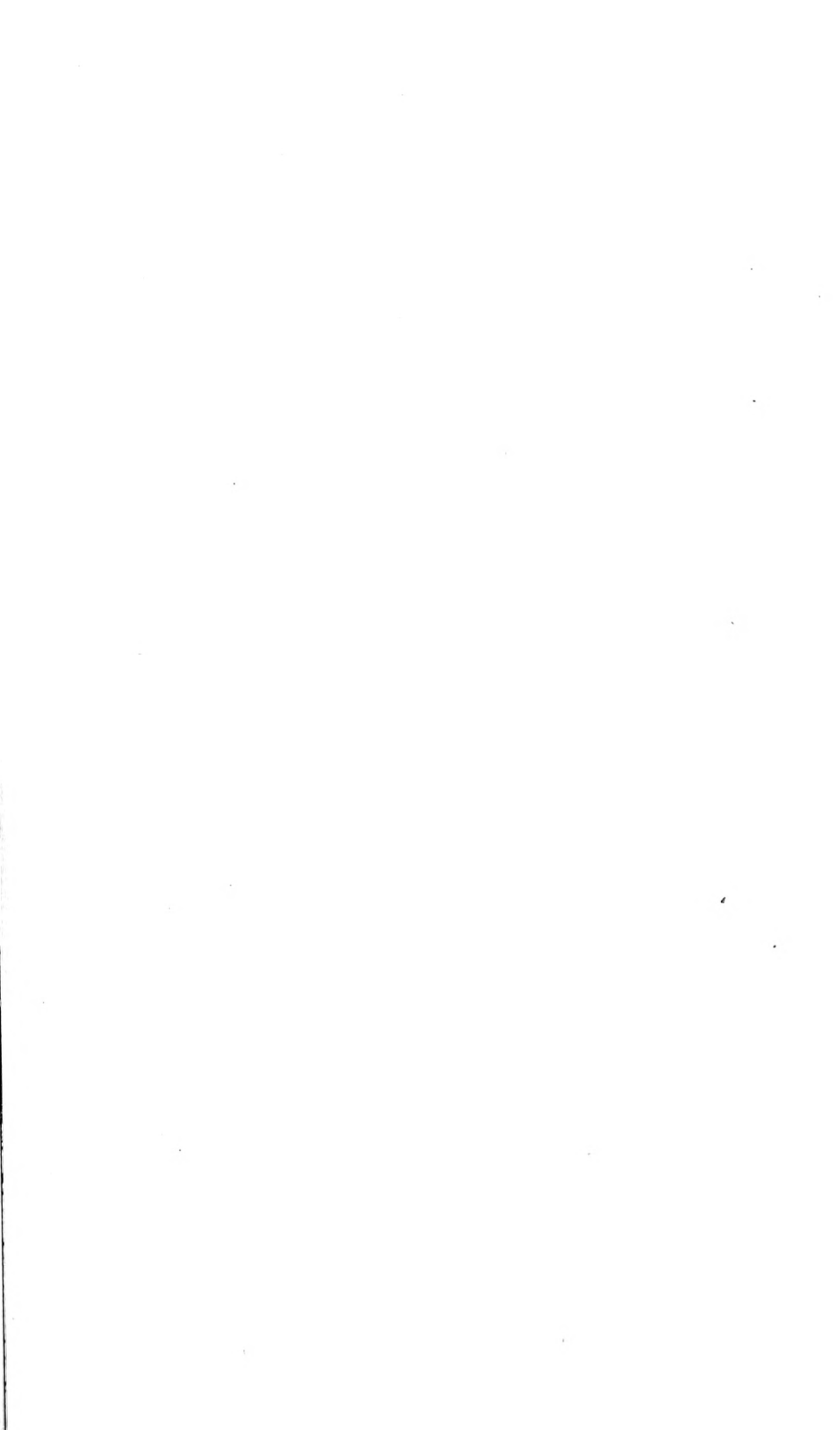
Dead! Garfield dead! Why, that name was a synonym for abounding vitality, unfailing vigor. Dead! Has he spoken a long farewell to all his greatness? His heart quickens no more with tenderness for mother, or wife, or children! Well may we say "what shadows we are, what shadows we pursue."

"This is the state of man: to-day he puts forth
The tender leaves of hope: to-morrow blossoms,
And bears his blushing honors thick upon him;
The third day, comes a frost, a killing frost."—

Is it the old story of the preacher, "vanity of vanities, all is vanity"? Nay, not so! Such a life is never finished! He has added to the store of human knowledge, and his influence will widen "with the process of the suns." There is another lustrous name to be emblazoned on the rolls that never turn to dust; another statuesque figure for monumental marble and bronze; another splendid model for the young to follow, for the older to emulate; another great type of courage, brave endeavor, and unenvied success. Dead, yet living! Living forevermore to speak down the centuries, and call the lowly to honor, the valiant to victory, and the pure in heart to the kingdoms of this world, and the world to come!



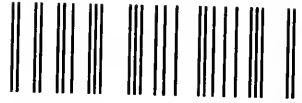








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